



Pacific Palisades Community Council

2019 Awards Honorees

Five dedicated Palisadians will be honored at the annual PPCC Holiday Meeting & Awards Celebration on December 12, 2019 at the Pacific Palisades Woman's Club.

Kevin Niles has been honored as this year's Citizen of the Year – a worthy recipient in the tradition of 72 years of past Citizens. His volunteer service to the Palisades has been long-standing and exemplary, and his recent leadership of two successful youth programs sponsored by the American Legion Palisades Post 283 – the Oratorical Scholarship Program and Boys State -- has been extraordinary. The Oratorical is a rigorous national speech contest for high school student orators, focusing solely on the U.S. Constitution. Kevin helped manage the program at the Post level and was in charge at the District level, meticulously handling all details, helping recruit judges (well-known Palisadians) and staff, counseling the student contestants, and even accompanying the amazing Daniella Wilson (Brentwood School student) as she progressed through all succeeding levels (local, District, Area & State), all the way to the National Quarter Finals this year. Kevin also brought the Legion's participation in Boys State – a program for high school boys that takes place in Sacramento and teaches valuable lessons in leadership, government & democracy – to new levels this year, as District Chair of the Legion's program and the leading advocate for supporting and funding the program at Post 283. He also undertook the huge management task of recruiting the many boys from Pali High and other Westside schools (including Palisades residents) who filled the bus to Sacramento, and staged kick-off and post-event dinners for the boys and their families. As noted Palisadian Sam Lagana told the boys at the kick-off dinner, Boys State was a life changing experience for him as a boy, and it will be a life-changing experience for each of the boys.

Kevin has also contributed greatly to the Palisades community in countless other volunteer capacities. He has served Palisades veterans and the community for many years as a member of the Legion's Post 283, serving as a Commander and on many Post committees. He is currently the Adjutant (having assumed that position after his Oratorical and Boys State efforts were accomplished). He is the long-time Cubmaster for Cub Scout Pack 223 (165 boys, grades K-5) and has long been associated with Boy Scout Troop 223 in the Palisades. He is a longstanding member of the Pacific Palisades Rotary Club and currently serves as Club President. He has also volunteered for many years with PAPA, the Palisades Americanism Parade Association that puts on our beloved 4th of July Parade; Kevin & his wife Nancy (current President of the Womans Club) were chosen by PAPA to serve as the Parade Marshals in 2017. It is our honor to recognize Kevin for his outstanding service to Pacific Palisades with the Citizen of the Year award.

Don Camacho will receive a Golden Sparkplug Award for his tireless work to acquire and install five new, beautiful solar-powered scoreboards at the Palisades Recreation Center's Field of Dreams. A member of the Pacific Palisades Baseball Association (PPBA) board, he single-handedly raised nearly \$250,000 to make

improvements to the Recreation Center. After raising the money, he worked for almost a year with the City, the Coastal Commission, engineers, contractors, and the supplier to provide the new scoreboards (one of which has been on display during this season's flag football program). The scoreboards will be available to all organized sports teams. We thank Don (whom his nominator describes as a "very modest man") for his "behind the scenes" yet significant efforts benefiting our youth.

Lisa Glantz was selected as a Golden Sparkplug awardee for producing and managing the new Holiday Hullabaloo event at the Palisades Recreation Center in record time last year. With a "joyous can-do nature" (as described by her nominator), within two and a half weeks she inspired numerous volunteers to help put together a special "kid-centric" event in the Palisades, combining elements of the past "Ho Ho Ho" tradition, with appearances by Santa & Mrs. Claus on the Station 69 Fire Engine and "Mayors" Billy & Janice Crystal as Santa's elves, a bake sale, toy donation drive, fun kids' activities, a photo booth, live music, dance performances and more. And she's doing it all again this year! Hats off to Lisa for combining the old and the new in this successful Palisades holiday tradition.

Mike Lanning has been chosen for Golden Sparkplug honors based on his leadership in bringing girls into scouting in the Palisades this year. Respected Scoutmaster of the renowned Palisades Scout Troop 223 for 60+ years (and 2019 4th of July Parade Marshal!), Mike enthusiastically led the effort to recruit girls for the new Girls Group in Troop 223 when Boy Scouts of America expanded their program to include girls. As a result, there are now 30 girls in the Troop, with 12 Second Class Scouts and 18 Tenderfoot Scouts. Combined, the group has earned more than 200 merit badges. Twelve of the participants are on track to earn the rank of Eagle Scout in May of 2021. We salute Mike for embracing the concept of girls in scouting and for leading the way in the Palisades to create strong female leaders of tomorrow.

George Wolfberg will be presented with well-deserved Pride of the Palisades honors for more than four decades of incredible dedication and service to the Palisades community. With quiet dignity, boundless energy and enduring optimism, he has effectively led numerous community efforts and organizations, including serving three terms as PPCC Chair (now into his fourth term!), many years as the Santa Monica Canyon Civic Organization's President, and as ongoing Chair of the Brown-Acted Potrero Canyon Community Advisory Committee. He was an active participant in the ultimately successful No Oil! campaign; went door-to-door collecting signatures on a petition that led to the creation of the Coastal Commission; doggedly worked to preserve the historic Eucalyptus Grove in Rustic Canyon; acted (and continues to act) as the Palisades liaison to the PCH Task Force, the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils Land Use & Planning Committee, and on numerous planning & development projects, including the California Incline, the Coastal Relief Sewer Project and the northern extension of the Beach Bike Path. He is known to and beloved by many Palisadians for his decades of work in youth athletics as a respected AYSO National 1 Referee. He has not slowed down even during recent serious illness, continuing to press the City to properly account for and complete the long-awaited Potrero Canyon Park and recently engaging in person with Caltrans officials to demand the long-requested and much-needed "fix" of the unsafe Chautauqua & PCH intersection. A former Citizen of the Year, he has been a mentor to many community members and is respected by all who have been fortunate enough to work with him. We cannot think of a worthier recipient of this recognition and are honored to bestow upon George the title of Pride of the Palisades!